

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4-7, 10, and 14-18, cancel claim 3, without prejudice or disclaimer, and add new claim 19 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting a gateway network node for a mobile station served by a serving network node, in a system where at least two network operators may share a radio network and the serving network node, the system comprising at least two gateway network nodes, the method comprising
maintaining partner information about predefined partner networks, the partner information indicating that said network operators share the serving network node;³ and
selecting a gateway network node for the mobile station on the basis of the partner information;⁷

wherein the selecting a gateway network node for the mobile station on the basis of the partner information comprises

checking on the basis of the partner information whether a mobile station is in the home network, in a predefined partner network of the home network, or in a network outside them;

selecting the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in its home network;

selecting the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in a predefined partner network of the home network; and

selecting the gateway network node of a visited network if the mobile station is outside its home network or predefined partner mobile networks of its home network.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the partner information comprises direct or indirect indications of
the network in which the mobile station is located;¹ and of
the home network of the mobile station.

3. Cancelled

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the selecting a gateway network node for the mobile station on the basis of the partner information ~~comprises~~selection step of the method comprises the steps of

checking on the basis of the partner information whether the mobile station is in a network that is a predefined partner network of the one belonging to its home network operator; and

selecting the gateway network node of a visited network if the mobile station is in a network that is a predefined partner network of the one belonging to its home network operator.

5. (Currently Amended) A mobile communications system comprising
at least one mobile station;
a subscriber register for maintaining subscriber information of the mobile station;
at least two networks to which the mobile station ~~may connect~~ when it is within the area of the network, one of the networks being the home network of the mobile station, the networks comprising at least one gateway network node for interaction between packet switched mobile networks and external data networks; and
at least one serving network node for serving the mobile station while the mobile station is in the area of the serving network node,
wherein the system is configured to maintain partner information about networks that are predefined partner networks of the home network, the home network sharing at least one serving gateway network node with each of the predefined partner networks;
and to
~~select the gateway network node by utilizing the partner information.~~
wherein the system is further configured to

check on the basis of the partner information whether a mobile station is in the home network, in a predefined partner network of the home network, or in a network outside them;

select the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in its home network;

select the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in a predefined partner network of the home network; and

select the gateway network node of a visited network if the mobile station is outside its home network or predefined partner mobile networks of its home network.

6. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 5, wherein the partner information is maintained in the serving network node to indicate the networks sharing the serving network node.

7. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 6, wherein the serving network node is configured to compare the MNC/MCCmobile network code/mobile country code of the mobile station, in connection with the context activation of the mobile station, with APN-access point name operator identifiers stored for each network operator sharing the serving network node, said mobile network code/mobile countryMNC/MCC code indicating explicitly the home network of the mobile station and said access point name APN-operator identifier indicating implicitly the partner information.

8. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 5, wherein the serving network node is also configured to connect a mobile station located in a mobile network that is a predefined partner network of its home network to the gateway network node of the home network.

9. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 5, wherein the partner information is maintained in a subscriber register.

10. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 9, wherein the subscriber register is configured to

check the partner information in connection with the location update of the mobile station-(MS);

set the value of a “Visitor-PLMN address allowed”-flag to ‘No’ if the mobile station is in a predefined partner network of the home network; and

indicate the value of the flag to the serving network node.

11. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 5, wherein the serving network node is also configured to connect the mobile station located in a predefined partner network of its home network to the gateway network node of the home network.

12. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 5, wherein the subscriber register is configured to

check the partner information in connection with the location update of the mobile station, the partner information comprising at least one network belonging to the home network operator;

set value of the “Visitor-PLMN address allowed”-flag to ‘Yes’ if the mobile station is located in a network that is a predefined partner network of the one belonging to its home network operator; and

indicate the value of the flag to the serving network node.

13. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 5, wherein the serving network node is also configured to connect the mobile station located in a predefined partner network of the one belonging to its home network operator to the gateway

network node of the visited network on the basis of the partner information, the partner information comprising at least one network belonging to the home network operator.

14. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 9, wherein the subscriber register is configured to

compare the mobile network code/mobile country~~MNC/MCC~~ code of the mobile station with access point name ~~APN~~-operator identifiers stored for each network operator sharing the network in connection with the location update of the mobile station; and indicate the result of the comparison to the serving network node.

15. (Currently Amended) A subscriber register for maintaining subscriber information in a system comprising

at least one mobile station,

at least two networks to which the mobile station ~~may connect~~s when ~~it~~ the mobile station is within the area of the network, one of the networks being the home network of the mobile station, the networks comprising at least one gateway network node for interaction between packet switched mobile networks and external data networks;[;] and

at least one serving network node for serving the mobile station while the mobile station is in the area of the serving network node,

the subscriber register comprising:

a first routine for maintaining partner information about networks that are predefined partner networks of the network, the partner network and the home network sharing at least one serving ~~gateway network~~ node;[;]

a second routine for checking the partner information of the mobile station;[;] and

a third routine for indicating, on the basis of the partner information, the gateway network node, to which the mobile station is to be connected, to the serving network node serving the mobile station,

wherein the subscriber register is configured to

check on the basis of the partner information whether a mobile station is in the home network, in a predefined partner network of the home network, or in a network outside them;

indicate the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in its home network;

indicate the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in a predefined partner network of the home network; and

indicate the gateway network node of a visited network if the mobile station is outside its home network or predefined partner mobile networks of its home network.

16. (Currently Amended) A serving network node for relaying packet switched data in a system comprising

at least one mobile station;

a subscriber register for maintaining subscriber information of the mobile station;
and

at least two networks to which the mobile station ~~may connect~~ when it is within the area of the network, one of the networks being the home network of the mobile station, the networks comprising at least one gateway network node for interaction between packet switched mobile networks and external data networks,

the serving network node comprising:

a first routine for checking partner information about networks that are predefined partner networks of the network, the partner network and the home network sharing the serving gateway network node;
and

a second routine for selecting a gateway network node on the basis of the partner information;

wherein the serving network node is configured to

check on the basis of the partner information whether a mobile station is in the home network, in a predefined partner network of the home network, or in a network outside them;

select the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in its home network;

select the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in a predefined partner network of the home network; and

select the gateway network node of a visited network if the mobile station is outside its home network or predefined partner mobile networks of its home network.

17. (Currently Amended) A serving network node according to claim 16, wherein ~~it~~ further comprises a third routine for maintaining partner information.

18. (Currently Amended) A serving network node according to claim 16, wherein ~~it~~ the network node is the ~~SGSN~~ serving general packet radio service support node of a ~~GPRS~~ general packet radio service network.

19. (New) A serving network node for relaying packet switched data in a system comprising at least one mobile station and at least two networks, one of which is a home network of the at least one mobile station, the serving network node comprising:

means for checking partner information about networks that are predefined partner networks, the partner network and the home network sharing a serving network node, and

means for selecting a gateway network node on the basis of the partner information,

wherein the serving network node further comprises

means for checking on the basis of the partner information whether a mobile station is in the home network, in a predefined partner network of the home network, or in a network outside them;

means for selecting the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in its home network;

means for selecting the gateway network node of the home network if the mobile station is in a predefined partner network of the home network; and

means for selecting the gateway network node of a visited network if the mobile station is outside its home network or predefined partner mobile networks of its home network.